

Tips For Parents - Getting Young Children Ready For School

What does your child need to know before he or she starts school?

The following are among the basic skills that children need:

- Know their name, address and phone number.
- Be able to tie their shoes and get their coats and boots on and off.
- Be able to use the bathroom and wash their hands.
- Have experiences cooperating with other children; wait their turn, work with others, share supplies, etc.
- Use language appropriately and extensively.
- Have a healthy feeling of self-worth and positive feelings of self and of others (can-do attitude).
- Have good health and good nutrition habits.
- Be a good listener.

What can parents do at home to help prepare their children to succeed?

- Visit the school with your child prior to the first day of school.
- Allow your child to be a part of a playgroup, church group or another group where she will learn to work and play with others.
- Read to and with your child. The single most important activity for building the knowledge for success in reading is reading aloud to children.
- Talk to your child as you go through the day's activities.
- Try to spend at least 30 minutes a day talking and listening to your child.
- Talk about items found in the home and make labels together to show that the item names can be written down as words.
- Limit your child's TV viewing. Children who are watching television are not playing outside, thinking, or being creative.
- Buy or make hand puppets and help your child put on a puppet show after reading a favorite book.
- Sing or recite nursery rhymes, songs and finger-plays.
- Expect your child to succeed in school and celebrate when he does. Children work harder when their parents expect more and when parents recognize and praise their successes.

- Give your child tasks they can master. Help him learn one step at a time. Teach him to button his own clothing, climb steps. Build an "I can do" attitude.
- Let your child make some of the choices. If he's young, it may mean choosing a sandwich cut in triangles or squares. If he's older, he can decide what to do first, take a bath or pickup the toys.
- Hug your child and let him know your love is unconditional.
- Make learning fun. He will learn more and quicker if it's exciting and "game-like". "Let's see who can find the blue squares!" Cook together. Finger-paint, color, draw, cut and paste. Take a nature walk.
- Help your child choose healthy snacks such as fruit, carrot and celery sticks, plain popcorn, etc.
- Keep up with immunization requirements. Call your doctor or local Health Department to see if your child needs additional booster shots.
- Visit new and interesting places such as:

Library	Police Station
Airport	Bakery
Bank	Railroad Station
Farm	Museums
Park	Zoo
Post Office	Schools
Stores	Fire Station
Malls	